

Message Text

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22

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9797

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSIO USUN

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 6571

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: SEPT. 29 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORT MILITARY OPERATION IN METN
REGION

1. MEDIA REPORTED NEW OFFENSIVE AGAINST "DISORDERLY FORCES" IN
METN AND CABLES TO PRES. ASAD CONDEMNING SEMIRAMIS INCIDENT. PRESS
HEADLINED: "IN CABLES ADDRESSED TO PRES. HAFEX AL-ASAD, PALESTINIAN
MASSSES AND ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUE THEIR CONDEMNATION OF
SEMIRAMIS HOTEL CRIME. PALESTINIANS ASKED TO COUNTER THEIR DEVIATIONIST

LEADERSHIP. CRIMINAL OPERATION WILL NOT AFFECT UNITY OF STRUGGLE
AND COHESION BETWEEN SYRIA AND PALESTINE."

2. SAIQA COMMUNIQUE CARRIED BY MEDIA CLAIMED THA FORCES BELONGING
TO SAIQA AND LEBANESE ARMY VANGUARDS, " ASSISTED BY A UNIT OF SYRIAN
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FORCES IN BEKAA, CARRIED OUT MOPPING UP OPERATION AGAINST

ANARCHIST ELEMENTS IN SOUTH METN. (OFFENSIVE LAUNCHED) FOLLOWING PROCRASTINATION OF DEVIATIONIST ANARCHIST FORCES (IN ARRANGING) WITHDRAWAL OF THEIR FORCES FROM THAT REGION." AFTER CRITICIZING JUMBLAT, STATEMENT EXPRESSED HOPE THAT OPERATION WOULD SUCCEED AS "INCENTIVE FOR PEOPLE TO RETURN TO THEIR RIGHT MINDS AND TO CORRECT PATH." SAIQA ASSERTED THAT 120 FIGHTERS FROM AYN JALLUT BRIGADE HAD DEFECTED TO THEIR SIDE AND LISTED NUMBER OF VILLAGES ALLEGEDLY OCCUPIED BY ATTACKERS.

3. ACCORDING TO PRESS, PRES. ASAD APPOINTED MAJ. GEN. ZUHAYR GHAZAL, SEC GEN OF PRESIDENCY, TO VISIT SEMIRAMIS HOTEL VICTIMS WHO REMAIN IN HOSPITAL. ARTICLE NOTED ONLY SIX STILL HOSPITALIZED. REPORT THEN DETAILED ORGANIZATIONS--MAINLY PALESTINIAN--WHICH HAVE CABLED THEIR DENUNCIATION OF INCIDENT TO ASAD.

4. PRESS REPORTED WEST GERMAN TELEVISION REPORT ON ISRAELI-LEBANESE OPEN BORDER POLICY UNDER CAPTION, "WESTERN INFORMATION MEDIA EXPOSE TREACHERY OF DEVIATIONISTS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON."

5. AL-BAATH EDITOR COMMENTED ON RENEWED FIGHTING IN LEBANON THAT "SYRIA IS NOT SEEKING TO CLASH WITH PALESTINIAN DETACHMENTS. SYRIA IS THEIR STRATEGIC ALLY, AND IS ANXIOUS TO SAFEGUARD RESISTANCE." COLUMNIST IN SAME PAPER CRITICIZED SADT FOR UNDERMINING ARAB SOLIDARITY AND INCITING TRAGIC EVENTS IN LEBANON. HE THEN CITED STATEMENT BY RABIN: "SINAI ACCORD WAS KEY CAUSE OF RUPTURE OF SYRO-EGYPTIAN ALLIANCE AND ERUPTION OF WAR IN LEBANON."

6. COMMENT: MEDIA PROMOTING VIEW THAT NEW OFFENSIVE MARKS ATTACKS BY PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE FORCES AGAINST "DEVIATIONIST" ADVERSARIES IN LEBANON, WITH AN ASSIST FROM SYRIAN MILITARY. IMPRESSION GIVEN THAT CLASHES INTENDED TO EXPEL LATTER FORCES FROM METN, AND DOES NOT IMPLY THAT FIGHTING WILL EXTEND BEYOND BOUNDS OF MTN. PUBLISHED CABLES PURPORTING SUPPORT FROM VARIOUS PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS IN SYRIA, MANY OF WHICH WE HAVE NEVER HEARD OF, SEEMS WHICH MOST READERS UNLIKELY TO SWALLOW.
MURPHY

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